

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D. C. 20505

26 February 1986

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

With John McMahon's retirement at the end of March, I would like to recommend that Robert Gates be appointed Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.

You will recall that Dr. Gates briefed you on more than one occasion, most recently a few days before your departure for Geneva, on our major estimate on the internal situation in the Soviet Union.

Dr. Gates joined the Central Intelligence Agency in its Career Training Program 20 years ago. Over his 20 years of service here, he has served as a US Air Force intelligence officer, as an analyst briefing on Soviet policies and tactics, as Special Assistant to the Director for the SALT talks in 1972, and as Assistant National Intelligence Officer for Strategic Programs. In 1974, he was assigned to President Nixon's National Security Council Staff under Dr. Kissinger, with responsibility for Soviet and European affairs. He continued at the NSC under Brent Scowcroft for the duration of the Ford Administration. Returning to CIA, he developed a long-term plan for research and carried out a nationwide survey of private sector and academic work on the Soviet Union at research centers in the United States. During 1977, he was asked to return to the NSC Staff as Special Assistant to Dr. Brzezinski. Returning to CIA in 1979, he became Director of the Strategic Evaluation Center, and was soon appointed Executive Assistant to the Director. Toward the end of 1980, he asked to return to analytical work and was appointed National Intelligence Officer for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

During 1981, Dr. Gates served with me in the Director's office as Director of the Executive Staff and as Director of Policy and Planning. In January 1982, he became the Deputy Director for Intelligence, in which capacity he is responsible for directing a staff responsible for all the analysis and estimating activities of the Central Intelligence Agency. In September 1983, I asked Dr. Gates to serve concurrently as Chairman of the National Intelligence Council. In that capacity he is responsible for the development of all National Intelligence Estimates prepared in the Intelligence Community and directs the officers who represent the Intelligence Community in dealings with policy and decisionmakers throughout the American government.

STAT

During his four years as the head of one of the largest research and analysis organizations in the world, Dr. Gates has demonstrated a high degree of management skill. He carried through the most far-ranging reorganization in the history of the Intelligence Directorate, a shift from a functional basis to a regional basis. This greatly improved the focusing of military, political and economic expertise on issues in a multidisciplinary way. It also, for

the first time, squared the organization of intelligence to the way the rest of the government is organized and to the way problems tend to come up on a regional rather than a functional basis.

He instituted and carried through a far-ranging plan to improve CIA analysis, increasing its output three-fold and, at the same time, sharply improving its breadth, depth and range.

Dr. Gates is highly respected within the Intelligence Community. He is widely known and respected throughout the military, diplomatic, and other elements of the policy community.

Along with John McMahon and myself, he has been a principal spokesman for intelligence on the Hill and in meetings at the National Security Council and other interdepartmental groups.

Save only John McMahon, Dr. Gates' knowledge and understanding of the Intelligence Community, its relationship and how it works, in my opinion, exceed that possessed by anyone else. I have great confidence in his clarity and toughness of mind, his managerial skills and effectiveness, his discretion and integrity.

I have counselled with the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Advisor, and the Chief of Staff, as well as others in the policy and intelligence communities, and I am confident that Dr. Gates' appointment as Deputy Director of Central Intelligence would be received with approval and enthusiasm.

Respectfully yours,

William J. Casey